

# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT And Decision Record

EA-NV-030-08-026  
SRP # NV-030-08030

## **Best In The Desert**

### *Vegas to Reno*

## Competitive Off Highway Vehicle Event Nevada

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Carson City Field Office  
5665 Morgan Mill Road  
Carson City, NV 89701

Mineral, Churchill, Lyon Counties, Nevada  
July 2008



**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
AND  
DECISION RECORD  
FOR**

**Best In The Desert: 2008 “Vegas To Reno”**

EA-NV-030-08-026

SRP NV-030-08030

**INTRODUCTION**

In conformance with 43 CFR 2930.11 (a) (2), Best In The Desert (BITD) has submitted a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) application to conduct a competitive off highway vehicle (OHV) race in Nevada. The proposed race would cross public lands administered by the following Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Field Offices: Las Vegas, Tonopah, and Carson City. The permit would be authorized through a joint Field Office permit with coordination delegated to the Carson City Field Office (CCFO). Each Field Office is responsible for ensuring their respective NEPA documentation is completed and/or adequate.

Existing analysis relevant to the Tonopah and Las Vegas Field Offices’ adequately address the proposed action, however; additional analysis was completed in the CCFO. The EA prepared for the CCFO considered two alternatives; the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action is the preferred Alternative for this Action. EA-NV-030-08-026 is incorporated by reference in the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

**PLAN CONFORMANCE AND CONSISTENCY**

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan (2001), REC-2, Section 8, Recreation, Desired Outcome: #1: *Provide a wide variety of recreation opportunities on public land under the administration of the Carson City Field Office.*

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT DETERMINATION**

Based on the analysis of environmental assessment EA-NV-030-08-026, I have determined that no significant impacts on the human or natural environment will result from the action. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed and will not be prepared. This finding is based on the context and intensity of the project as described:

**Context:**

The proposed action involves the one-time per year use of approximately 250 miles (out of an available 532 miles of course network) of BLM administered roads within the CCFO that by itself does not have international, national, regional, or state-wide importance. The point-to-point (south to north) race enters CCFO in Mineral County and is conducted along dirt roads to Dayton, Nevada.

In addition to crossing public land, the event also uses roads that traverse private lands, county maintained roads, and cross over/under state highways. The permit applicant is responsible for notifying private land owners and for securing additional permissions and permits from the U.S. Forest Service, state, counties, cities and towns if affected by the race event. The proponent also notifies permittees and other interests by mail several weeks prior to event. The event is widely supported by the Nevada Department of Tourism and by most rural counties in need of economic expansion.

**Intensity:**

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations includes the following ten considerations for evaluating intensity:

*1) Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.*

None of the environmental effects discussed in detail in the EA is considered significant, nor do the effects exceed any known threshold of significance, either beneficial or adverse. The proposed action is generally classified as special use.

*2) The degree to which the selected alternative will affect public health or safety:*

Motor vehicle racing is an inherently dangerous sport and measures are taken each year to improve the safety of the event for participants and spectators. Stipulations typically include provisions for dust control; traffic management; road maintenance; discussion about public land use ethics, public safety, and driver safety on public land in operational briefings; and provisions for signing access points to the exercise sites to inform public land users of their presence.

To further protect wildland resources, general public and race participants, the BLM implements a **Temporary Public Land Closure** (F.R./Vol. 73, No. 86/May 2, 2008/Notices). This restricts all but event traffic to the race area. No camping or spectator areas are encouraged outside of the designated pit areas. This closure, in conjunction with signs and route monitoring personnel, help prevent the general public from utilizing the race route or adjacent public lands during the event.

*3) Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.*

There are no park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers or ecologically critical areas in or near the sites proposed.

Portions of the route network will utilize Gabbs Valley Wilderness Study Area boundary roads as in previously permitted events. The WSA boundary roads have all been bladed at one time for mining and livestock operational developments. Monitoring of previous race events along the WSA boundary routes has shown that use has stayed with the established route and no short cuts have developed. The Gabbs Valley WSA will not be impaired as a result of the race.

None of the prehistoric or historical resources in proximity to the proposed action are determined by BLM to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Therefore, no known significant cultural resources are present in the area of the proposed action.

*4) The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.*

The effects of the Proposed Action on the human or natural environment were determined to be negligible. The actions, racing primarily on existing roads and pitting on previously disturbed areas are consistent with special use events. The event is generally classified as special use and the effects on the land are not likely to be controversial.

*5) The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.*

The proposed action is not unique or unusual. The actions described in the EA is racing on existing roads and pitting in highly disturbed areas. There are no predicted effects on the human environment that are considered highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

*6) The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or presents a decision in principle about a future consideration.*

The proposed action is in conformance with 43 CFR 2930.11 (a) (2) and has been a permitted annual occurrence since the mid 1990's. The statutory authorities underlying the regulation(s) in

this part are the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, 43 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*, and the Federal Land Recreation Enhancement Act (REA), 16 U.S.C. 6801 *et seq.* REA authorizes the BLM to issue special recreation permits for recreation events (16 U.S.C. 6802(h)).

7) *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*

All resource values were evaluated for cumulative impacts and determined that cumulative impacts would be negligible as a result of the proposed action or alternatives.

8) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.*

As described in the subject EA, the project will not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

9) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under ESA of 1973.*

As described in the EA, a federally listed endangered species occurs in a discrete habitat near one small portion of the race course in Mineral County, Nevada. Although the species presently occurs, the habitat in question has not been designated as critical by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The habitat area has been closely monitored during past race events. There has been no affect to the habitat and the listed species continues to thrive. For these reasons, the proposed race route will not affect the federally listed species or its habitat.

10) *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.*

As described in the subject EA, the proposed action does not violate any known Federal, State, or local law or requirement for protection of the environment. Officials from the Walker River Paiute Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe and the Yomba Shoshone Tribe were notified of the proposal.

### **Decision**

It is my decision to approve the action as described in the Proposed Action of the environmental documentation cited above and following mitigation:

### **Mitigation:**

The two sections of proposed routes located within Nugent Wash would not be permitted which would reduce potential impacts to sensitive species habitat and the spread of noxious weeds. The two route segments would be re-aligned on well established roads.

### **Rationale**

The Proposed Action, as mitigated, meets the criteria described in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to *prevent undue and unnecessary degradation of public land*. The Proposed Action is in conformance with the Resource Management Plan for the Carson City Field Office.

\_\_\_\_\_/s/ B. Smith\_\_\_\_\_  
Bryant Smith, Associate Field Manager  
Carson City District Office

\_\_\_\_\_  
July 30, 2008  
Date

It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

**EA-NV-030-08-026**  
**SRP # NV-030-08030**

**I. INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE AND NEED**

**A. INTRODUCTION**

In conformance with 43 CFR 2930.11 (a) (2), Best In The Desert (BITD) has submitted a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) application to conduct a competitive off highway vehicle (OHV) race in Nevada. The proposed race would utilize and/or cross public lands administered by the following Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Field Offices: Las Vegas, Tonopah, and Carson City. The permit would be authorized through a joint Field Office (FO) permit with coordination delegated to the Carson City Field Office (CCFO) Outdoor Recreation Planner. Each FO is responsible for completing their respective NEPA documentation.

The point-to-point (south to north) race enters CCFO in Mineral County and this year would be conducted along about 245 miles of dirt roads to Dayton, Nevada. On an annual basis, however; the proponent would utilize a portion of the proposed CCFO course to define the annual race route through the CCFO, typically around 250+ miles each year. Approximately five hundred and thirty-two (532) miles of route would constitute the available CCFO course network. Eight pit areas and one finish (Dayton, NV) would accommodate refueling, mechanical repairs and related support of the riders/drivers and machines.

In addition to crossing public land, the event also uses roads that traverse private lands, county maintained roads, and cross over/under state highways. The permit applicant is responsible for notifying private land owners and for securing additional permissions and permits from the U.S. Forest Service, state, counties, cities and towns if affected by the race event. The event is widely supported by the Nevada Department of Tourism and by most rural counties in need of economic expansion.

The proposed course is a conglomeration of race routes dating back to the 1980's, however; for the purpose of this document, the following EA's and related race routes, as they pertain to the CCFO administrative boundary, represent 84 percent of the proposed course in this EA:

Environmental Assessment (*NV-056-96-041: Best in the Desert Racing Association Inaugural 1996 "Vegas to Reno" OHV Race*) was prepared in 1996 by the BLM Las Vegas Field Office. Each affected Field Office, or at that time Resource Areas within each District, along the 550 mile route contributed relevant evaluations of the proposed action within their respective management areas. The information was incorporated into the EA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was made.

In 2003, an Environmental Assessment (*EA-NV-030-03-34: Hawthorne Off Highway Vehicle Race V.O.R.R.A.*) was prepared by the BLM Carson City Field Office for the 55 mile race route. A Finding of No Significant Impact was made.

In 2004, an Environmental Assessment (*EA-NV-030-03-013: Vegas to Reno OHV Races Best in the Desert Racing Association*) was prepared by the BLM Carson City Field

Office. Each affected Field Office along the 500+ mile route contributed relevant evaluations of the proposed action within their respective management areas. The information was incorporated into the EA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was made.

In 2005, an Environmental Assessment (*EA-NV-065-2005-025: Nevada 1000 OHV Races Best in the Desert Racing Association*) was prepared by the BLM Battle Mountain Field Office. Each affected Field Office along the 900+ mile route (125 miles in CCFO) contributed relevant evaluations of the proposed action within their respective management areas. The information was incorporated into the EA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was made.

Since then, the EA's listed above have been used as the basis for subsequent races. Administrative Determinations and Determinations of NEPA Adequacy have been completed by each affected management area office for each race. Other Field Offices will continue to base their decisions on these pre-existing EA's as long as the proponent utilizes previously analyzed routes and pit areas.

This Environmental Assessment is being written to address sixty-two (62) miles of proposed routes not analyzed in the EA's identified above. The EA will provide the CCFO an opportunity to consolidate, update and incorporate new review criteria, regulatory requirements and monitoring from the conduct of past events as it relates to public lands managed within the CCFO.

## **B. PURPOSE AND NEED**

The purpose of the proposed action is to conduct an annual competitive motorcycle race on BLM CCFO managed lands in Mineral, Churchill, and Lyon Counties, Nevada. With continued review and approval, the event is likely to recur annually over the next five years.

The proposed action is needed to meet public demand for motorized events and to provide the public an opportunity to experience a competitive event in a directed, controlled and organized setting. The high percentage of public lands administered by federal agencies and the network of available roads and trails make Nevada suitable for off-highway events such as the Vegas to Reno OHV Race. These types of activities also rely on public lands to provide a large geographical area of undeveloped lands not typically found in the private sector.

Historic use and Presidential Executive Order (EO) 11644, as amended by EO 11989, and BLM regulations 43 CFR 2930 have set a precedent for this type of OHV activity as a legitimate use of public lands, if conducted in a manner that minimizes conflicts with resources and other users, and maximizes public safety. The State of Nevada has a tourism-based economy, which includes special events to attract people to the State and rural communities.

## C. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE STATEMENT

The proposed action described in this document is in conformance with the Carson City Field Office *Consolidated Resource Management Plan* (May 2001):

### RECREATION

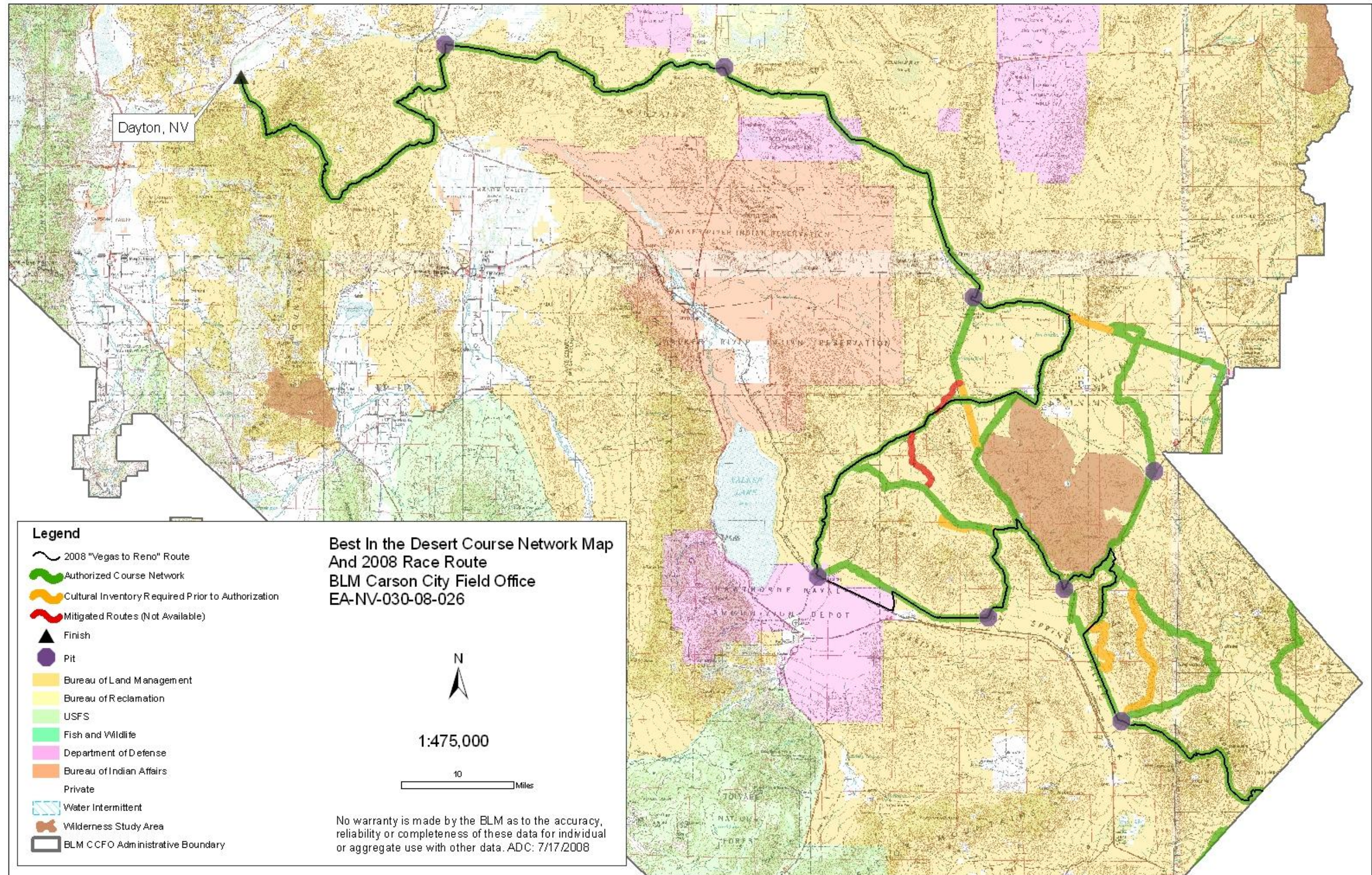
Section 8 – REC-2: **Desired Outcomes**, 1: “Provide a wide variety of recreation opportunities on public land under the administration of the Carson City Field Office.”

Section 8 – REC-2: **Land Use Allocations**, 1: “All public lands under CCFO jurisdiction are designated open to Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use unless they are specifically restricted or closed.”

Section 8 – REC-6: **Administrative Actions**, 4: “On public land designated open for off highway vehicles, there will generally be no restrictions on use. Organized competitive OHV events have been allowed in Mason Valley, Wilson Canyon, Hungry Valley OHV Area, Moon Rocks, Lemmon Valley MX Area, Dead Camel Mountains, Salt Wells Area, Wassuk Range and in the Frontier 500 and Carson Rally OHV corridors. Organized events will be handled on a case-by-case basis through the Special Recreation Permit review and Environmental review process. Organized activity is generally restricted to existing roads and trails.



## I. Introduction/Purpose and Need





## **II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

### **A. PROPOSED ACTION**

The proposed action is to conduct an annual competitive OHV race on BLM public lands located in Mineral, Churchill, and Lyon Counties, Nevada over a period of five years. The proposed point-to-point event is a long distance race and would be conducted primarily on well established dirt roads. The annual race would typically occur in mid to late August and would also involve a “pre-drive” about two weeks prior to the race date where participants conduct a reconnaissance of the course.

On an annual basis, the proponent would utilize a portion of the proposed CCFO course to define the annual race route through the CCFO, typically around 250+ miles each year. Approximately five hundred and thirty-two (532) miles of route would constitute the available CCFO course network. Eight pit areas and one finish (Dayton, NV) would accommodate refueling, mechanical repairs and related support of the riders/drivers and machines in the CCFO.

The race would involve several classifications including but not limited to trophy trucks, Hummers, motorcycles and quads. Anywhere from 280-340 vehicles would begin the race, however; about 1/3 of the vehicles would not finish the race for various reasons typically related to mechanical or equipment problems. Participants would be spread out over the course as a result of staggered starts, allowing for a safer event and reduced route expansion. Vehicles would pass each other at appropriate wide sections in the route. The slower vehicle would pull over to the side of the route to allow the faster vehicle to pass at speed in the race route.

Highway/road crossings would be manned and pits would be located in previously disturbed areas. Portable toilets would be provided in each pit area and a temporary Public Land Closure would be in effect to provide for public safety.

Chase vehicles and pit crews would travel on the highways and dirt access roads leap-frogging to and from the check points and pits. Support teams would track their racer through radio communications and live computer graphic interactive tracking systems using Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and aircraft. The event promoter would provide for all Emergency services including rescue. This entails providing aircraft and ground support personnel.

The promoter also would acquire paved road crossing permits from Nevada Department of Transportation, and coordinate with County Commissioners and road maintenance crews. Road wardens, with flags, would be stationed at all cross roads. These volunteers would hold back race traffic until the roads are safe to cross. Checkpoints serve two purposes: to ensure that shortcuts are not taken and to ensure that each entrant is tracked for safety. Temporary directional signs would be placed throughout the course, as well as signs that would warn the driver of potentially hazardous areas. The entire course would be marked on both sides of the proposed route. The promoter works with the local mining claimants to ensure the race route is on approved routes that avoid mine related digging and equipment. Hazards that cannot be moved are brightly flagged and bannered to reduce the risk of a rider collision or fall.

The promoter would arrange for post event maintenance where graders, tractors and drags may be used to remedy center berms, stutter bumps and ruts on certain dirt roads. Repair and payment for damage to fences, gates, livestock or other property is the responsibility of the promotional organization.

### **Monitoring**

The Carson City Field Office SRP policy requires that all OHV events be monitored. The objective of event monitoring is to ensure that the events are conducted in a safe and organized manner and in accordance with BLM regulations and permit stipulations. Monitoring is also conducted to confirm approved routes prior to the race and to identify and document actual resource impacts for post use analysis, recommendations and the development of future alternatives, where applicable. Typical monitoring methods include photo documentation, GPS mapping and personal observations in a post-use report format.

### **Permit Stipulations**

The permit stipulations provided in Appendix 3 that pertain to BLM administered lands in the CCFO are incorporated by reference in this Proposed Action.

## **B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

The *No Action Alternative* would result in no race course in the CCFO as currently proposed. The applicant (BITD) would be denied a Special Recreation Permit to conduct competitive motorized race events on public land in the CCFO.

## **III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

### **A. SCOPING AND ISSUE IDENTIFICATION**

Since the mid 1980's, public letters have been mailed prior to the event date. The mailing list generally included grazing allotment permittees, utility corridor right-of-way holders, interested local residents, commercial businesses, local newspapers, natural resource management agencies, historic preservation representatives, and Native American representatives. Letters advised the public of the Special Recreation Permit application and requested public comment regarding the event. Historically, external issues consisted of road conditions after the race and the impacts to grazing access. Internal issues identified over the years consist of road conditions and maintenance following the race, invasive, non-native weed species, recreation, and special status species.

External issues identified over years of scoping associated with similar events has been consistent, subsequently no additional external scoping is warranted at this time. Regardless, the BLM CCFO and the proponent would send event information to the contacts listed upon SRP authorization informing them of the event.

Internal scoping was initially conducted at the CCFO Interdisciplinary Meeting on March 24, 2008, and again in late June. The following issues were identified:

- Post race road conditions are unfavorable in certain locations.
- There may be BLM listed sensitive species growing along portions of the proposed route.

Internal scoping identified the following entities to be notified:

- Allotment permittees
- Hawthorne Army Depot
- General public 30 days prior to race

## **B. PROPOSED ACTION**

### **General Setting**

The event crosses into the Carson City area at the Mineral County line approximately 30 miles south of Mina, Nevada. The route travels through high desert, rugged foothills and adjacent to rocky hillsides and mountain peaks.

The vegetation is typical of the high desert and includes Bailey's greasewood (*Sarcobatus baileyi Coville*), Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*), winterfat (*Krascheninnikovia lanata*) and fourwing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*). Upper elevations may support scrubby stands of Pinyon and Juniper trees, except in the Pinenut Mountain Range where Pinyon-Juniper stands are more vigorous. Water is scarce except for Walker Lake located north of Hawthorne. The general climate is typical semi-arid desert – temperatures average 90 – 105 throughout the summer, annual precipitation ranges from 4"-6" of rainfall.

The elevation of the race route varies from approximately 4,000 feet to 7,200 feet. Public lands in the area are utilized for utility and road rights-of-way, livestock grazing, mineral exploration, military support facilities, and dispersed recreational activities. Adjacent private lands in the region are mainly used for residences and mineral extraction (patented lands).

### **Critical Elements of the Human Environment**

Appendix 5 of BLM's NEPA Handbook (H-1740-1) identifies Critical Elements of the Human Environment that are subject to requirements specified by statute or executive order and must be considered in all BLM environmental documents. The Critical Elements are:

### III. Affected Environment

Critical Element	Not Present *	Present/Not Affected *	Present/May Be Affected**	The following rationale was used to determine that Critical Elements present in the area would not be affected as a result of implementation of the Proposed Action.
Air Quality		X		Travel on roads and trails would create fugitive dust, however; the activity would be temporary and short in duration.
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	X			
Cultural Resources			X	
Environmental Justice	X			
Farm Lands (prime or unique)	X			
Floodplains	X			
Native American Religious Concerns		X		The Native American Tribes that have cultural affiliation with the area of this proposed race are the Walker River Paiute Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe and the Yomba Shoshone Tribe and they were notified in 2008 relative to this undertaking (per 36 CFR 800 and 43 CFR 8100 [BLM], as amended).
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid			X	
Invasive, Nonnative Species			X	
Threatened or Endangered Species		X		One discrete area near a portion of the route contains a federally listed species. The area has been closely monitored during past race events. There has been no affect to the area and the listed species continues to thrive.
Migratory Birds			X	
Water Quality (Surface/Ground)	X			
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	X			
Wild and Scenic Rivers	X			
Wilderness			X	

\*Critical Elements determined to be Not Present or Present/Not Affected need not be carried forward or discussed further in the document.

\*\*Critical Elements determined to be Present/May Be Affected must be carried forward in the document

### **Cultural Resources**

Generally, evidence indicates human occupation in the central Great Basin may have begun as early as 12,000 years ago and has continued up to the present. In the historic period, traders, ranchers and miners explored and inhabited the region.

Routes comprising the racecourse network are a combination of modern and historic linear features that have continued to be used and improved over time and newly constructed routes that have been developed to accommodate various land uses and resource developments. Many of the historic linear features are used today for modern travel corridors, recreational access for hunting and exploring, and by public land permittees such as grazing allottees, mining operators, and utility corridor right-of-way holders. Historic mill sites, mineral exploration pits and aggregate material sites are a dominant part of the overall landscape.

The potential exists for adverse impacts to cultural resources and/or historic properties due to issuance of this SRP. The area of the proposed race contains some locations of known cultural resources. To date, in and immediately adjacent to the BLM-managed lands of the proposed race course, known cultural resources represent significant past human use of the landscape. These include prehistoric-period lithic scatters, stone alignments, and camp sites of a wide range of age ranging from the Paleoarchaic (over 8500 years ago) through the nineteenth-century. Also present are historic-period debris scatters, ranching features, stone structures and buildings, and roads associated with mining, limited settlement, and transportation.

Specific to historic properties, the impacts that may have occurred likely were reached during prior events that occurred before the present. By definition, an historic property is a “prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places” and includes “artifacts, records, and remains that are related to and located within such properties” (36 CFR 800.16(l)(1)). Therefore, potential recreation-related impacts to historic properties were probably greater at a previous time.

### **Hazardous Materials**

There are no known hazardous material sites along the route. Petroleum products such as gasoline and diesel fuel, and lubricants such as oil and grease would be used by the motorized race vehicles throughout the duration of the event. Race vehicle fueling, lubrication and repairs would occur at the pit locations and the finish area as needed.

Chase and spectator fueling would occur at commercial stations along the paved highways and in cities and towns paralleling the race route.

### **Invasive and Non-native Species**

Preventing the introduction and spread of noxious weeds is one objective of Integrated Weed Management Programs on Bureau of Land Management lands throughout the United States as directed under Executive Order 13112 – Invasive Species. The term “invasive species” is defined as an alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. The term “noxious weed” is defined as plants designated as noxious weeds by the Secretary of Agriculture or by the responsible State official. Noxious weeds generally possess one or more of the following characteristics: aggressive and difficult to manage, poisonous, toxic, parasitic, a carrier or host of serious insects or disease, and being native or new to or not common to the United States or parts thereof.

There is a record of Hoary Cress (*Cardaria draba*), along portions of the event area as well as in the general area. Perennial pepperweed or tall whitetop (*Lepidium latifolium*) is prevalent along roadway drainage channels. The plant has also been observed throughout areas where moisture and receptive soils appear. Salt Cedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*) can be found in some drainages. These plants are considered noxious weeds.

The dry washes located within Nugent Wash and the unnamed wash south of Nugent Wash in T11N, R31 1/2 E Sec 36 and T10N, R31E Sec 5 are suitable habitat for invasive weeds due to more favorable growing conditions found in the washes.

Figure 1. Halogeton dominated site within Nugent Wash.



As seen in Figure 1, halogeton (*Halogeton glomeratus*) is found in large patches throughout the wash. If this area were to be used as a race route, OHVs would continually destroy native vegetation allowing invasive species like Halogeton to occupy more and more areas of the wash. In addition, OHVs would spread halogeton seeds throughout the wash and into adjacent areas creating larger areas which are eventually dominated by this invasive species. Halogeton is toxic to domestic livestock. Further spread of this invasive species by OHVs would result in further deterioration of range conditions.

Salt cedar or tamarisk (*Tamarisk ramosissima*) is also found throughout the project area but only in springs or in dry wash areas (Figures 2. and 3. respectively) due to the greater amounts of available moisture in these areas. Tamarisk is exceedingly difficult and costly to eradicate. Designating the dry wash areas as race routes would only further the spread of tamarisk throughout the area which in turn would degrade wildlife habitat and increase the costs and workload associated with tamarisk eradication efforts.

#### **Federally Listed Species**

On June 16, 2008, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's electronic listing of federally listed threatened, endangered, proposed for listing, and candidate species was reviewed to determine which species might be associated with this project area. A federally listed endangered species occurs in a discrete habitat near one small portion of the race course. \* Although the species

presently occurs, the habitat in question has not been designated as critical by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The proposed event route is located about ¼ mile from a discrete habitat area in one of the southern mountain ranges with the Carson City Field Office. The area is habitat for a federally listed species.

\*The species is not named in this document because of the easily identified habitat that supports this species and inherent potential risk to the species within a limited habitat.

#### **Migratory Birds**

On January 11, 2001, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13186 (Land Bird Strategic Project) placing emphasis on conservation and management of migratory birds. The species are not protected under the Endangered Species Act, but most are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. Management for these species is based on Instruction Memorandum – IM 2008-050 dated December 18, 2007. IM 2008-050 contains a list of species of concern that are a minimum for analysis of impacts. The species of concern that could occur in the general project area are shown in Appendix 2 (BLM 2007).

The Intermountain West is the center of distribution for many western birds. Over half of the biome's Species of Continental Importance have 75% or more of their population here (Beidleman 2000). Shrubsteppe was identified as the highest priority habitat for conservation for breeding birds (Saab and Rich 1997; Paige and Ritter 1999). Ten percent of the world's population of ferruginous hawks breed in Nevada (Floyd et al 2007). The woodland habitat type supports the largest nesting-bird species list of any upland vegetation type in the West (Beidleman 2000).

Some migratory bird species use every habitat the proposed race route crosses year in and year out. There are several Important Bird Areas (IBA) associated with the general areas containing the proposed race route. The Mt. Grant and Walker Lake IBA's occur near the Gillis Range race routes. The Carson Valley IBA occurs near the Pine Nut race routes (McIvor 2005). None of the routes go through these areas; the IBA's are close enough to provide bird species occurrence that might not be found elsewhere in the same habitat type.

Sage grouse have been discussed as a game species in the general wildlife section.

Burrowing owl could be expected in some areas although no known nest burrows have been identified. Burrowing owl has unique issues related to direct collision with OHV vehicles (NDOW 2008). This owl often nests in cavities dug into road berms that put it in close proximity of vehicles on the road. Coupled with this, the owl isn't especially afraid of people or human activity.

Loggerhead shrikes would be expected to nest and forage in the general project area. Prairie falcons nest on cliff faces, particularly those with east aspects. It would most likely occur near the IBA areas.



Ferruginous hawks nest in flat top juniper trees located at the end of a juniper stringer running through sagebrush habitat. Preferred locations are stringers on east or southeastern slopes. Northern Harrier, if present, would be incidental due to using the adjacent IBA wetlands. Mourning Dove would use the general project area but doesn't choose bare ground roads / trails as a nest site. This dove uses shrubs and the ground for nesting among other strata ([www.natureserve.com](http://www.natureserve.com)).

Sage sparrow would use the project area and would nest in it. This bird needs a large block of unfragmented, habitat to successfully breed and survive; no less than 300 acres in size for one breeding pair (BLM ND). This bird is vulnerable to activities that reduce or fragment sagebrush habitat ([www.natureserve.com](http://www.natureserve.com)) Brewer's sparrow requires a breeding patch size that is larger than sage sparrow (Rotenberry and Wiens 1998); 600 acres minimum per breeding pair (Walker 2004). This bird is a shrub obligate that is threatened by large scale reduction and fragmentation of sagebrush habitats occurring due to a number of activities, including road and power-line rights of way (BLM ND).

Virginia's Warbler, pinyon jay, gray vireo and Swainson's hawk could all be seen in the woodland areas of the race route. Olive-sided flycatcher and band-tailed pigeon may occur along the race route associated with the highest points in the Pine Nut Range.

Golden eagle nesting is common in cliffs with eastern aspects. Nests could occur within a few miles of the proposed race routes associated with the Gillis Range and Gabbs Valley Range.

Most of the migratory bird habitats associated with lower elevation shrub / grass types are at risk from invasion by exotic annuals (Neel 1999; Floyd et al 2007). Out of the Species of Concern that were identified, ferruginous hawk, prairie falcon and loggerhead shrike would specifically use annual grassland (cheatgrass) areas for forage ([www.natureserve.com](http://www.natureserve.com); Neel 1999). Disturbed areas serve as fertile areas for exotic annual establishment ([www.fs.fed.us/database/feis](http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis))

#### **Wilderness**

The race route follows the south and west boundary roads of the Gabbs Wilderness Study Area. All portions of the route that utilize the WSA boundary roads have been bladed at one time.

The south route segment follows Petrified Wash from Calvada Summit road junction. The west segment follows the Rhyolite Pass Road, then northward on the road connecting to the Finger Rock Well Road to the north.

#### **Resources or Uses Other Than Critical Elements**

The following resources or uses, which are not Critical Elements of the Human Environment as defined by BLM Handbook H-1740-1, are present in the area. BLM specialists have evaluated the potential impact of the Proposed Action on these resources and documented their findings in the table below. Resources or uses that may be affected by the Proposed Action are further described in this EA.

Resources or Issue	Not Present *	Present/Not Affected *	Present/May Be Affected**	The following rationale was used to determine the resources present in the area would not be affected as a result of implementation of the Proposed Action.
Human Health & Safety			X	
Lands & Realty			X	
Soils			X	
Vegetation			X	
Range		X		Damage to forage would be minimal since no new surface disturbances are proposed. Any damaged road sections would be repaired per permit stipulations.
General Wildlife			X	
Special Status Species			X	
Recreation			X	
Minerals		X		Access to some mining claims may be affected, but it would be temporary and of short duration.
Wild Horse & Burro			X	

\*Other resources determined to be Not Present or Present/Not Affected need not be carried forward or discussed further in the document.

\*\*Other resources determined to be Present/May Be Affected must be carried forward in the document

### **Other Resources (non critical elements) Present and Brought Forward for Analysis**

#### **Human Health and Safety**

The event route is frequently within view of highways, roads and communities. Spectators are welcome at the pit areas. Road crossings are popular viewing areas. Parking and traffic distractions may occur.

Abandoned mines, mill sites, shafts and mine workings are numerous and may be within 100 feet of the race route. Some of the historic and modern (to 1970's) mining related activity is directly adjacent to the race route. Open holes and hoisting hazards are fenced and signed. Most are accessible by dirt roads and few are excluded from the general public.

Motorized vehicle events utilizing roads and trails on BLM managed public lands may create the risk of collision between event participants, other public land users or wandering livestock. Small groups of cattle and wild horses roam throughout the area.

There is a low risk of wildland fire from an errant vehicle exhaust or other human cause if drought conditions prevail and vegetation is extremely dry at the time of the event. Camping may occur at the designated pit areas throughout the duration of the race.

#### **Lands and Realty**

Surface Estate: Public and Private - BLM managed public lands; private lands and developed community lands. Most of the private lands are a mixture of residential and commercial uses in town, with undeveloped parcels and patented mining claims outside of towns.

Mineral Estate: Public.

Major Roads: The Proposed Action occurs near or crosses paved highways and county dirt

roads.

**Minor Roads:** The Proposed Action occurs on and crosses several established dirt roads and Jeep trails

**Right-of-Way - Power Line:** Several overhead utility line alignments are crossed under and followed along throughout the race course route.

**Right-of-Way – Natural Gas Pipeline:** The pipelines are buried several feet underground. The race route crosses the pipelines and follows the adjacent roads for several miles in the Gabbs and Wabuska locations.

**Urban areas:** The race event occurs near rural and developed towns along the Highway 95 corridor and highway laterals from the Mineral County line to Dayton, Nevada.

#### **Soils**

Affected soils would be located on the route pathway and at pit stops. The soils within the proposed action area vary considerably in physical, chemical, and biological characteristics. The highly diverse parent materials, topography, and climates have created soils with a wide range in major soil characteristics. The soils in the area range from very shallow (less than 10") to greater than 60" in depth and are derived from a variety of parent materials. Soil textures vary from sand, and sandy loam in areas of granite and sandstone parent materials to clay-dominated textures in areas of volcanic parent materials. The lower elevations are alluvial fan deposits consisting of loam, sand and silt soils. Upper elevations are mostly packed dirt (clays), with large, angular rocks and cobbles.

Parent material, surface and subsurface textures and rock fragments, elevation, aspect, and slope determine the inherent productivity. Erosion and runoff potential, while affected greatly by these factors, is also dependent upon the basal and canopy cover of vegetation on site. Most soils have a high erosion potential when disturbed. At higher elevations, vegetation is the main factor in controlling erosion. At lower elevations, vegetation and desert pavement are the controlling factors. (\*Abandoned Mine Lands Programmatic EA August 2000).

Also, roads, livestock and horse use, mining and other overland activities, and general motorized vehicle use have impacted soils in certain areas. Of the average route mileage the proponent may use in any given year, it is estimated that 80% crosses BLM and 20% crosses private and/or county lands and roads. Of this, approximately 95% is on roads that have been bladed or graded and 5% follows washes that accommodate and are traveled by motor vehicles.

Detailed descriptions of the soils within this area can be found within the respective county soil survey, issued by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service.

#### **Vegetation**

The region is dominated by three vegetation communities - sagebrush, desert shrub, and pinyon-juniper. The typical sagebrush community has fairly dense to open vegetation with shrubs and an understory of perennial and annual grasses and forbs. Important shrubs in the sagebrush community include big sagebrush, black sagebrush, rabbitbrushes, Mormon tea, curly leaf mountain mahogany, bitterbrush, snowberry, and horsebrush. Globemallow and winterfat also occur, among others.

Grasses include Sandberg bluegrass, Great Basin wildrye, Indian ricegrass, squirreltail, muttongrass, and needle-and-thread grass. The desert shrub community is dominated by shrubs in open stands, with a large amount of bare soil or desert pavement. Understory vegetation is often sparse at lower elevations except when seasonal precipitation produces flushes of annuals. The valley bottom and lower fan piedmont contain salt desert shrub communities composed primarily of shadscale, budsage, and galleta grass, spiny hopsage, chenopods and greasewood. Pickleweed, seep weed, alkali weeds, glassworts, and saltgrass can occur within the saline basins.

The pinyon-juniper vegetation type grows at mid-elevations on mountain slopes. It is a cold-adapted evergreen woodland with the unequal dominance of two conifers, juniper and pinyon pine. The trees may present a closed canopy without understory vegetation, or the community may appear as an open stand of scattered trees with a diverse and well-developed understory. The associated species include Utah juniper, and pinyon pine. The associated understory of shrubs, grasses and forbs consists of a variety of vegetation from sites near woodland communities.

#### **General Wildlife**

The proposed race routes travel through a wide variety of wildlife habitats that support a diverse array of wildlife species. Major terrestrial wildlife habitats (Nevada Wildlife Action Plan 2006) that occur within the project area are:

**Intermountain Cold Desert Scrub** – Historically, this habitat would have been dominated by Indian rice grass. Historically, spiny hopsage, shadscale and chenopods would have been found at the lower elevations of this allotment. Wildlife species associated with this habitat type include pale kangaroo mouse, Great Basin collared lizard and Butler-throated sparrow

**Sagebrush** – At the middle elevations, Wyoming sage brush and low sagebrush occur. Mountain big sage brush occurs on north slopes of lower elevations and higher elevation slopes. Great Basin pocket mouse, sagebrush lizard and sage sparrow are species associated with this habitat type.

**Lower Montane Woodlands** - Singleleaf pinyon and Utah juniper are the dominant vegetation types on the east side of the allotment. Mountain mahogany, Cliffrose and bitterbrush may be present at the upper elevations of the east side. Wildlife species such as short-horned lizards, gray fox and gray vireo can be found associated with the habitat type.

**Timber / aspen** - Small amounts of true timber and aspen may occur at higher elevations, particularly in the Pine Nut range. In many cases, this habitat type isn't large enough in acreage to support a different assemblage of wildlife species than the surrounding area but would add some species richness and diversity through temporary use.

**Talus and Volcanic Rock** - There is a large amount of talus and volcanic rock outcroppings in some areas of the proposed route. The volcanic cliffs provide excellent raptor nesting and perch sites. Many are east, southeast facing which is ideal for nesting. This habitat type may support several bat species, particularly spotted bats.

The proposed race route passes through mule deer habitat associated with the Gabbs Valley Range portion of the proposed race route. The route that passes through the Pine Nut Range is key mule deer habitat (NDOW 2006).

Bighorn sheep range is present in the Gillis Mountain and Gabbs Valley Range portions of the proposed race route (NDOW 2006). No key areas have been identified.

Pronghorn antelope can be found in all of the valleys along the proposed race route (NDOW 2006). No key areas have been identified.

Sage grouse occur along a portion of the route that passes through the Pine Nut Mountains. The event takes place in August when young sage grouse would be strong enough to flee from disturbances with the brood hen. The route does not pass by any wet meadows or other habitats that would attract large numbers of sage grouse or would be critical to sage grouse in August.

Black Bear habitat occurs in the Pine Nut range (NDOW 2006).

#### **Special Status Species**

##### BLM Sensitive Species

BLM Manual 6840 defines sensitive species as "...those species not already included as BLM Special Status Species under (1) Federal listed, proposed or candidate species; or (2) State of Nevada listed species. Native species may be listed as "sensitive" if it: (1) could become endangered or extirpated from a state or significant portion of its range; (2) is under review by the FWS/NMFS; or (3) whose numbers or habitat capability are declining so rapidly that Federal listing may become necessary, or (4) has typically small and widely dispersed populations; (5) inhabits ecological refugia, specialized or unique habitats; (6) is state-listed, but is better conserved through application of the BLM sensitive species status." It is BLM policy to provide sensitive species with the same level of protection that is given federal candidate species. The major objective of this protection is to preclude the need for federal listing. BLM sensitive species associated with this allotment are shown in Appendix A (BLM 2003).

The dry wash areas located within Nugent Wash and the unnamed wash south of Nugent Wash in T11N, R31 1/2 E Sec 36 and T10N, R31E Sec 5 are suitable habitat for the endemic Nevada oryctes (*Oryctes nevadensis*). This annual species inhabits sandy-gravel areas and, depending on the time of year, is impacted by OHVs in two ways: 1.) destruction of the plant by repeated impacts with vehicle tires, 2.) numerous vehicles racing through the loose sand and gravel disrupt the seed dispersal pattern and burial which makes germination the following spring difficult or impossible (Monzingo and Williams, 1980; NNHP, 2001).

Sage Grouse and desert bighorn were discussed as game species. Ferruginous hawk, burrowing owl, prairie falcon and loggerhead shrike were discussed under migratory birds.

There would be some species of bat use in the area associated with cliffs, rock outcrops and trees. Some bats use washes and riparian areas for forage.

Songbirds associated with various habitat types would be present in areas adjacent to the proposed race route.

### **Recreation**

Dispersed, casual recreational uses of the region range from limited to moderate in intensity and generally consist of motorcycle riding, off-highway vehicle driving, rock hounding, hunting, wildlife viewing and to a lesser, degree, hiking. The areas roads and trails are frequently utilized for other commercial, recreational activities and permitted events such as guided big game and upland bird hunting, competitive horse endurance rides, Off Highway Vehicle rallies, mountain bike events and various horseback, wagon, ATV and Jeep tours conducted along the roads and trails. These events and activities occur under BLM permit and County approval.

### **Wildhorse and Burro**

BLM protects wild horses and burros on public lands under the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 (PL 92-195). As such, BLM protects the animals from harassment, removal and death. Each BLM management area has identified herd management areas where wild horse and burro population numbers are monitored. Animal numbers are maintained at a level that is compatible with the resources (forage and water) to balance natural wildlife habitat, livestock and other permitted uses.

The proposed racecourse passes through the Pilot-Table Mountain and Pine Nut HMAs and near the Lahontan HMA. Due to compatible environments, animal numbers range from 50 to more than 100 in each HMA. Bands of horses are generally small (10 or less) and are scattered throughout the HMAs wandering amongst the scattered natural water sources.

### **C. NO ACTION**

The description of the affected environment for these alternatives would be the same as that for the proposed action.

## **IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

### **A. PROPOSED ACTION**

#### **Critical Elements of the Human Environment**

##### **Cultural Resources**

It is important that there is no net loss of scientific information regarding cultural resources, and that NRHP eligible sites (historic properties) are managed so as to prevent or minimize adverse impacts. Cultural resource concerns regarding competitive OHV racing and related effects focus on NRHP eligibility of historic properties, site type, and the potential impacts from race-related activities.

Relative to NRHP eligibility, as discussed in the affected environment, the issuance of the permit may have a potential for affecting historic properties through current or future recreation activities. The BLM recognizes the potential for OHV racing to impact historic properties can occur through two scenarios:

- a) Potential impacts from dispersed OHV or other vehicular operations on historic properties not associated with the running of the race, and not where pit areas or other factors may attract and concentrate people and vehicles.

Based on previous work by BLM throughout the Intermountain West and Southwestern U.S., BLM considers continued dispersed use of the landscape by people in this EA to have no effect on prehistoric sites that are historic properties on the open landscape.

- b) Potential impacts from concentrated humans and vehicles distribution on historic properties located near or within pit areas or other factors may attract and concentrate people and vehicles.

Types of historic properties are known for the region, but based on reconnaissance of the routes by BLM archaeologists previous to past racing along this route, are not likely.

Determinations of project effects upon cultural resource deemed eligible for inclusion on the NRHP must be completed prior to project undertakings, and would include notifying the Walker River Paiute Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe and the Yomba Shoshone Tribe. In addition, for any alterations of the physical race route, BLM would insure that every historic property within the area of potential effect from an issuance of the SRP will have any potential adverse effects resolved, ideally through avoidance. Resolution of adverse effects will be completed prior to initiating an undertaking, pursuant to 36 CFR 800, and in consultation with the Walker River Paiute Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe and the Yomba Shoshone Tribe and the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office. If these cannot be accomplished, specific project routes will be cancelled, or the permit will be modified to result in no adverse effect to the historic property.

Specific to the additional proposed course not covered in previous EA's, a cultural resources inventory was conducted in May 2008 on approximately 23 miles of the total 62 miles of additional routes proposed. Based on this inventory, professional archaeologists documented or updated the presence of resources. None of these prehistoric or historical resources are determined by BLM to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Therefore, no known significant cultural resources are present in the area of the proposed action. Details of the inventory, evaluation, and NRHP determination are found in Cultural Resources Report 08-363 (Lane 2008). Under the proposed action no potential to affect cultural resources would occur due to issuance of a SRP.

The remaining 39 miles (approximate) of proposed course not inventoried would need to be inventoried prior to future authorization. Refer to the course map in this EA for detailed locations of these un-inventoried segments.

#### **Hazardous Materials**

Race vehicle fueling, lubrication and repairs are most likely to occur within the designated pit locations. These activities are strictly managed through race and BLM permitted event stipulations to eliminate or minimize spills and leakage onto the ground. If a vehicle is broken beyond repair, it is loaded onto a trailer and hauled to a garage.

All other materials such as trash and litter are required to be removed immediately following the race and pit area occupation. Under the proposed action no potential to affect hazardous materials would occur due to issuance of a SRP.

#### **Invasive and Non-native Species**

Surface disturbance associated with an OHV event could allow for infestation of a site specific weed species such as tumbleweed, scotch thistle or tall white top. Seeds that are lying dormant in the soil may become active as a result of the OHV related soil disturbance especially if wet weather occurs soon after the event.

The August event date would be at the latter part of most plant-growth seasons. Plants are likely to be in a seed state there-by increasing the opportunity to propagate a species.

Race participants usually clean and maintain their vehicles before and after each event to ensure best mechanical performance. Most competitors take overall pride in vehicle appearance and maintenance. There is the possibility that unwashed vehicles (race, spectator or chase) may distribute plant material from a non-local area.

Most counties, in cooperation with the BLM, are engaged in active weed abatement programs. Chemicals are sprayed onto the plants seasonally. This spraying occurs during the growing season. Weed abatement chemicals would not affect participants.

Designating dry wash areas as race routes would only further the spread of tamarisk and halogeton throughout the area which in turn would degrade wildlife habitat and increase the costs and workload associated with noxious weed eradication efforts. This adverse impact would be mitigated as described in Section IV. C. of this document.

#### **Federally Listed Species**

The proposed event route is located about 1/5 mile from the federally listed species habitat. The habitat is situated south of and 30-90 feet higher in elevation than the proposed race course. Prevailing winds are from the west. Monitoring of the spring during similar events on this course has indicated that fugitive dust from an event does not settle over the listed species habitat.



The proposed course is not situated within the habitat's relatively small watershed. A wash and low ridge exists between the proposed race course segment and the habitat. No spectators or chase vehicles would have occasion to be in the area during the race.

The habitat area has been closely monitored during past race events. There has been no affect to the habitat and the listed species continues to thrive. For these reasons, the proposed race route wouldn't affect the federally listed species or its habitat.

#### **Migratory Birds**

The proposed race route and proposed time of the activity could disturb individual nesting neo-tropical migratory birds even though the race would be held on existing roads and trails. Any possible disturbance would be of short duration and if disturbed, most birds would be expected to return to a nest site. The proposed activity would not have an effect on regional or overall populations of neo-tropical bird species that would be associated with the activity area.

Birds temporarily disturbed from foraging or other non-nesting uses would move to another area or would return as soon as the disturbance ceased.

Burrowing owls are tolerant of human activity. However, this species experiences elevated levels of collision with OHV's when these intersect with owl burrows (Jeffers 2008). Human activity can also destroy burrowing areas. Fragmentation of habitat is an issue ([www.natureserve.com](http://www.natureserve.com)). Loggerhead shrikes are not particularly affected by human disturbance (Floyd et al 2007; [www.natureservelcom](http://www.natureservelcom)).

Pinyon jay responds negatively to picnicking and hiking (BISON ND) and individuals could be expected to respond in a similar fashion to the proposed race. However, the duration of the disturbance would be extremely short-term. Individual jays could be minimally affected by the proposed route during a race. Jay populations would not be affected by the proposal. Golden eagles are relatively intolerant of human activity (Floyd et al 2007). Nests would likely occur in cliff areas within a mile of the race route. Individual eagles could be minimally affected by the proposed route during a race. However, the duration of the disturbance would be extremely short-term. Eagle populations would not be affected by the proposal.

Because the proposed route would be on existing roads and trails, the activity wouldn't further fragment habitats of songbirds needing minimum patch size of contiguous habitat. Because the race route would carry OHV's from one end of the state to the other, there is a high probability of vehicles picking up plant material or seed from annual weeds and / or noxious weeds and carrying these along the CCFO route. Some vehicles may be used in races in other states. Undesired weeds and annuals establish easily in disturbed roadbeds making it easy to pick up and deposit seed or plant material all along the way- even in areas where they previously didn't exist. Weeds have the ability to fragment habitat and reduce patch size. The noxious weeds have the ability to eliminate native plant species. Transportation and deposition of undesired plant species is a long-term threat to migratory birds that could have local and regional populations consequences.

### **Wilderness**

All portions of the proposed route near the Gabbs Valley WSA have been bladed at one time for mining and livestock operational developments. The south route segment follows Petrified Wash from Calvada Summit road junction. The west segment follows the Rhyolite Pass Road (maintained by Mineral County road grader), then northward on the road connecting to the Finger Rock Well Road to the north.

Monitoring of previous race events along the same routes has shown that use has stayed with the established route. No short cuts have developed.

Mechanical maintenance of the route segment in Petrified Wash has been minimal. Rhyolite Pass Road is frequently graded to county standards. The Pit near Luning is an abandoned, aggregate material site.

The Gabbs Valley WSA would not be impaired as a result of the race. A visitor to the WSA on race day may be delayed. Visitors within the WSA on race day could be annoyed by the sights and sounds of race vehicles on the south and west boundary areas near the race course.

### **Human Health and Safety**

Motor vehicle racing is an inherently dangerous sport and is evident by the four reported deaths during previous Vegas to Reno races. Measures are taken each year to improve the safety of the event for participants and spectators. There have been few known collisions among participants, spectators, wildlife or livestock. The collisions could be quite damaging to both should they occur.

Most abandoned mines and mining related equipment have been adequately fenced to prevent or reduce human intrusion. Where the race route passes near a potential hazard, the area is clearly marked with brightly colored banners and/or painted plates commonly used to advise racers of a hazard on the racecourse.

The fire danger rating may be low to high during an event. Should drought conditions prevail, dry grass and brush may provide fuel should an ignition occur. All vehicles are required to have functioning mufflers and spark arresters. The event personnel check for this during the pre-race technical inspection.

To further protect wildland resources, the general public and race participants, the BLM implements a Temporary Public Land Closure. This restricts all but event traffic to the race area. No camping or spectator areas are encouraged outside of the designated pit areas. This closure, in conjunction with signs and route monitoring personnel, helps to prevent the general public from utilizing the race route or adjacent public lands during the event and therefore impacts to human health and safety would be minimal.

### **Lands and Realty**

Surface status, major and minor roads: The land status would not be affected. It is the applicant's responsibility to notify and receive authorization for temporary passage and/or exclusive use of lands and roads during the conduct of the race.

Ownership status (public or patented) of the mineral estate is not an issue in this situation. Running a race over the surface will have no impact on the mineral estate and vice versa.

Right-of-way holders: The overhead utility poles, guy wires, or other improvements associated with the utility line may represent a hazard to the racer. If these obstacles are within 10 feet of

the race course, they are flagged and barricaded to reduce the opportunity for collision. Depending on the situation, a racer could be injured if a collision occurred. No pits would be authorized along overhead utility corridors.

Pipelines transporting natural gas and water are marked by hilled dirt over the top of the line. A maintenance road parallels the pipelines. The race uses the maintenance roads. Pipelines are crossed at road junctions to avoid damaging the hilled protection berms.

Rural and urban areas: Private property owners are notified by the event promoter well in advance of the event date. Use agreements and permits are developed and obtained between the promoter, land owners and managers. Public and private entities are listed as additional insured on the commercial, public liability policy held by event permittee.

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect lands and realty would occur due to issuance of a SRP.

#### **Soils**

Event participants would be restricted to currently exposed and well-established road areas. Blowing dust from loosened soils as a direct result of vehicle travel could occur over a substantial length of the race route. Wind erosion potential for soils in the area of the proposed event varies from slight to severe. Dust may be most noticeable where very soft or loose soils occur. Spectator and chase vehicle traffic on accessory dirt roads and pit areas could contribute to soil disturbance.

Water erosion potential is slight to moderate along the route. Soils are of such a nature that either they are well-drained or have a high propensity for ponding. Ponding within the course could force race vehicles to go around the low spot or to drive through the puddle which may contribute to road rutting. Extremely wet conditions could generate moderate to deep ruts and occasional widening to avoid deeply trenched sections or standing puddles. Extreme conditions may postpone or cancel the event.

Adverse effects to the road surface could be more significant where the road surface is loose or soft. Loose and soft soils tend to be displaced to the side and center of the racecourse. Soil displacement enhances the appearance of tire ruts, turn and high center berms. Wash-boarding on the road surface may develop where the base road surface is solid and there is a loose surface cover of sand or gravelly loam. Wash-boarding may be most noticeable where vehicle speed is moderate. Less wash-boarding occurs where race speeds are fast.

Wheel-wobble bumps may develop where soils are soft and more engine power is applied. These impacts are likely to be scattered along short segments of the racecourse. Rocks could be loosened along cobbly segments.

Road effects are dependent upon soil type and obstacles along the road segment, soil moisture during race use, whether the route segment is an uphill climb, flat or down hill direction, and the type of race vehicle. Silty soils may be displaced when wet or dry; clay soils may become compacted or may rut when damp or saturated.

Smaller vehicles, such as ATV's and motorcycles, have little or no affect on the roads due to light weights, low tire pressure (ATV – dispersed foot-print) and narrow tire area. Dune buggies and Stock trucks have a moderate affect on roads. Class 8 trucks may have a more substantial affect on roads due to their being larger, heavier vehicles, more powerful engines, and aggressive tread tires.

Depending upon the soil type, disturbed soils may be displaced within a distance of from one to six feet of the race route. Displaced soils within three feet of the race course are available to be returned to the original route path as a part of post event maintenance. Soils displaced and scattered further distances are not as easily captured and returned to the path. Rocks may be loosened and create a rough, cobbly surface.

Straight, graded road segments can usually be raced at high speed (60 – 120+ mph). Impacts are minimal except where a high-speed turn is required or where the soils are loose or the vehicles' tires power through the packed surface. These segments may also be susceptible to wash boarding and wheel-wobble bumps. Vehicle passing could occur at the wider segments of the roads.

Side ditches along main roads could become rounded by vehicle travel or filled as a result of displaced soils. Post event maintenance would require repair of these features.

Monitoring over the past ten years has revealed that the race route combinations have stabilized, although there is always the desire to add variety to the existing pattern. Some routes have been temporarily removed from the pattern due to private ownership transitions and resource inventory recommendations. This has increased the pressure on the existing route system.

BLM stipulations, racer / event compliance with those stipulations, emphasis on minimum resource impacts, and extensive monitoring and has contributed to the stabilization of route location and minimum width expansion. Occasional course cutting does occur, but the event and BLM personnel quickly disqualify racers caught cutting. Cut corners are rehabilitated after the event. Course cutting has been greatly reduced over the past five years.

Mitigation standards written into the permit stipulations could neutralize most race impacts and effects within 60 days after the event. These standards are reviewed by the sponsor and agreed to prior to the permit authorization.

A BLM employee familiar with the restrictions in special areas would supervise any repairs needed in potentially sensitive areas.

The implementation of this alternative would have little effect on the overall soils resource. Disturbances to surface "soils" in dry washes would be localized and would disappear after the next precipitation event.

#### **Vegetation**

The implementation of this alternative would have little effect on the overall vegetative resource. Vegetation could be damaged or destroyed by participants leaving the approved course and running over vegetation. Vegetation would be damaged or destroyed by support and spectator vehicles running over vegetation in the race course and the periphery of the pit areas. Overall damage/destruction to vegetation in the pit areas would be low since vegetation is generally sparse in these areas. Damage to vegetation would be minimal along the course route as competitors are required to stay on the approved course.

#### **General Wildlife**

The proposed race route and proposed time of the activity could disturb individuals, but there wouldn't be an effect on regional or overall populations.

Although roads and trails fragment habitat which reduces small mammal and reptile biomass and individuals, the proposed route is for existing roads and trails. For this reason, the route and race wouldn't contribute or increase fragmentation effects.

Although noise can be an issue for reptiles and small mammals, even to the extent of interfering with life processes, the duration of the proposed race is extremely short and has a long cycle time in between races. For this reason, noise isn't expected to have more than a minimal impact on general wildlife.

The occasional mule deer and pronghorn antelope may be disturbed by the proposed activity for a short duration but wouldn't affect critical life cycle activities.

Bighorn sheep would occur in the roughest areas overlooking the race route. Although bighorn might notice the noise, their habitat would be screened by rock and cliffs that would keep disturbance to a minimum.

Low numbers of sage grouse next to the road maybe temporarily displaces during the event. Since the route takes place in August young birds would be able to easily follow the brood hen to a comfortable distance away from the event. The event does not pass by any wet meadows where sage grouse would congregate or critical habitat, therefore, the event would likely have little or no effect on sage grouse.

Black bears could be disturbed by the noise and move farther away. However, the race is of short duration and any disturbance would be minimal. These animals would move back soon after the disturbance ceased.

#### **Special Status Species**

##### BLM Sensitive Species

Although some raptors and songbirds might notice the noise and activity, and some might be displaced for a short period of time, there wouldn't be more than a minimal impact on these BLM sensitive species. The race activity at any given point is of extremely short duration and /or limited numbers of OHV's so that disturbance would be minimal.

Although some of the bat species that would use this habitat emerge at a time that would conflict with the race activity, the echolocation used by bats would help avoid any collisions. These animals would be expected to simply move until the short-duration disturbance ceased.

Impacts to burrowing owls are expected to be minimal or no more than ambient levels associated with general road traffic. Once the race has begun in Las Vegas, participants would string out and not be tightly bunched with possibly riding two abreast or more on a road. Participants would likely stay near the center of the road for stability, especially at night. These two factors would reduce the possibility of collision with burrowing owls. The permit stipulation that requires new berms resulting from the race be smoothed would eliminate the possibility of drawing burrowing owls to these areas and creating an environmental trap.

The route segments located within Nugent Wash and the unnamed wash south of Nugent Wash in T11N, R31 1/2 E Sec 36 and T10N, R31E Sec 5 are not suitable for inclusion into a route system for OHV racing events due to potential impacts and resulting deterioration of BLM sensitive species habitat and increase of invasive weeds.

The proposed race route and subsequent race wouldn't cause any BLM sensitive species to be upgraded to federal listing.

### **Recreation**

During the race event, dispersed recreation could be adversely impacted by the *Temporary Public Land Closure* (TPLC) implemented by the BLM to provide for public health and safety for the duration (2 days) of each annual event. Given the limited to moderate amount of dispersed recreation in the area, the implementation of this alternative would have little effect on the overall recreation resource.

Positive impacts to local economies would occur. It is estimated that this event could generate up to \$400,000 in income to the town of Beatty, Nevada alone.

### **Wildhorse and Burro**

Race use would occur on established roads within the affected HMAs. No forage would be lost. If in the vicinity of the racecourse, horses would be displaced from the area upon the arrival of the first vehicle. Animals would likely move a reasonable distance away from the course. Animals would not be restricted from food or water. Since the race is at the end of August, foals born in the spring (March to early June) would be strong enough to accompany the parent.

Collisions between a horse / burro and vehicle are possible, but remote. Injured animals must be reported immediately to the BLM in order to remedy aid or reduce suffering.

## **B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

### **Critical Elements of the Human Environment**

#### **Cultural Resources**

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect cultural resources would occur due to non-issuance of a SRP.

#### **Native American Religious Concerns**

Under the no action alternative no potential to effect cultural values or Native American concerns would occur due to non-issuance of a SRP.

#### **Hazardous Materials**

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect hazardous materials would occur due to non-issuance of a SRP.

#### **Invasive Non-native Species**

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect non-native species would occur due to non-issuance of a SRP.

#### **Federally Listed Species**

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect federal listed species would occur due to non-issuance of a SRP.

**Migratory Birds**

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect migratory birds would occur due to non-issuance of a SRP.

**Wilderness**

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect wilderness characteristics would occur due to non-issuance of a SRP.

**Human Health and Safety**

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect Human Health and Safety would occur due to non-issuance of a SRP.

**Lands and Realty**

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect Lands & Realty would occur due to non-issuance of a SRP.

**Soils**

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect soils would occur due to non-issuance of a SRP.

**Vegetation**

The implementation of this alternative would have no effect on the vegetation resource.

**General Wildlife**

There wouldn't be an effect to general wildlife and / or game individuals.

**Special Status Species****BLM Sensitive Species**

There would be no impacts to any individual BLM sensitive species.

**Recreation**

The implementation of this alternative would have no affect on the overall recreation resource or current recreation activities in the area, however; public demand for competitive event(s), collectively, may not be met if this proposed race did not occur. Moreover, local economies that count on the influx of revenues associated with this type of event could suffer.

**Wild Horse and Burro**

Under the no action alternative no potential to affect wild horse and burros would occur due to issuance of a SRP.

**C. MITIGATION MEASURES****BLM Sensitive Species - Nevada oryctes (*Oryctes nevadensis*)**

The route segments located within Nugent Wash and the unnamed wash south of Nugent Wash in T11N, R31 1/2 E Sec 36 and T10N, R31E Sec 5 are not suitable for inclusion into a route

system for OHV racing events due to the impacts and resulting deterioration of BLM sensitive species habitat and increase of invasive weeds.

- The two sections of proposed routes located within Nugent Wash and the unnamed wash south of Nugent Wash would not be permitted. This would reduce potential impacts to sensitive species habitat and the spread of noxious weeds. The unnamed wash located south of Nugent Wash would be eliminated from the route network. The other segment would be re-aligned on a well established, county maintained road.

### **D. RESIDUAL IMPACTS**

The roads and pit areas are well established. Spot maintenance has proven to be effective following race events that have occurred in the past.

There would be no residual, irretrievable or irreversible commitments of resources resulting from the issuance of the permit.

### **E. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

The cumulative effects of this event include the past, annual occurrence of the type of activity for two decades and the likely continuation of the events for the next five years. Some portions of the roads and trails used for racing have become wider as a result of the events and due to the additional use by casual public vehicles after an event. The annual impacts of each race are expected to be temporary. The predominant portion of the proposed course would be on well established roads.

Most widening has stabilized and has not increased noticeably over the past seven years. An example of widening might be an increase from an 8' wide path to 20' wide at some corners. Average linear width increase is from 8' to 12' wide. This has occurred where soils are soft and trees and other vegetation are less dense.

BLM stipulations, emphasis on monitoring and minimum resource impacts, and racer / event co-operation and compliance with those stipulations has contributed to the stabilization of route location and minimum width expansion. Occasional course cutting does occur. Event and BLM personnel may disqualify racers caught cutting. When cutting or short coursing is observed during a race, additional flagging and banners are added to reduce impacts. Affected areas are naturalized following the race. Course cutting has appeared to be lessening over the past five – ten years. This is likely due to increased OHV racers' awareness of proper land use ethics and concern about losing racing privileges on public and private lands. Route maintenance continues to be a challenge as timeliness and equipment costs need to be balanced.

Entrant participation numbers vary from year to year from a low of 150 to a high of approximately 400 total entrants. This variable is likely to continue. It is dependent on the racer's appreciation and success of the race management, course challenge, and weather factors during an event and economics. Support crew numbers vary with the celebrity status of the driver and the investment by vehicle sponsors.



There is the possibility that visitors associated with the proposed race may return to the area and ride or drive along portions of the course. This could bring an increase in use. Casual visitor exploration using ATV and Jeep may increase once the route is known.

Once an event is permitted, a site is generally considered “cleared”. This is interpreted as meaning similar events may again be permitted in or at the same area. It is likely that one to three events of similar size and nature may conceivably be permitted at this site annually over the next five years. Monitoring of each event conduct and effects would continue. Should impacts as a direct result of the events become detrimental to the landscape, cultural or natural features, the events may be discontinued at the discretion of the Authorizing Officer.

Casual use is likely to fluctuate with the economy and changing interests. When the economy is strong, enthusiasts are more likely to spend extra cash on recreational vehicle upgrades and modifications to enhance vehicle appearances and performance. When the economy is slow, participation in less costly recreational pursuits is likely.

Each year more individuals are purchasing off highway vehicles (OHVs) and coming to areas managed by the BLM to ride or drive OHV's. BLM lands are beginning to become known for OHV use, which includes: ATVs, dirt bikes, dune buggies and four wheel drive vehicles. With or without the proposed race, more people could be coming to the area to participate in outdoor recreation activities. It is important to maintain open roads and trails in order to direct use onto sustainable routes. Use of the popular routes helps protect natural and cultural resources scattered about on the less popular routes and more primitive areas

Throughout this environmental assessment, resource values have been evaluated for cumulative impacts. It has been determined that cumulative impacts would be negligible as a result of the proposed action or alternatives.

Within the reasonably foreseeable future it is anticipated that BITD will propose to increase the proposed CCFO course of approximately 524 miles by 32 percent. This estimated increase could result in around 167 miles of proposed new course in the CCFO. The course would be aligned on well established BLM and County roads. The intent of the additional course is to provide the proponent an alternative finish in Fernley, Nevada, provide variation in route opportunities and allow the proponent to rest rotate segments of course over each year.

#### **E. MONITORING**

The monitoring described in the Proposed Action is sufficient for this action.

**V. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION**

**A. LIST OF PREPARERS**

Linda Appel	Rangeland Management Specialist
John Axtell	Wild Horse and Burro Specialist /Wildlife Biologist
James Carter	Lead Archaeologist
Arthur Callan	Outdoor Recreation Planner
James deLaureal	Soil Scientist/Noxious Weeds
Jill Devaurs	Rangeland Management Specialist
Terri Knutson	Environmental Coordinator
Elizabeth Lane	Archaeologist
Katrina Leavitt	Rangeland Ecologist
Susan McCabe	Archaeologist
Robert Mead	Rangeland Management Specialist
Jim Schroeder	Lead Hydrologist
Rita Suminski	Supervisory Wildlife Biologist
Dean Tonenna	Plant Ecologist

**B. PERSONS, GROUPS AND/OR AGENCIES CONSULTED OR NOTIFIED**

The Walker River Paiute Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe and the Yomba Shoshone Tribe were notified. Per BLM mailing list, proponent notifies permittees and other interests several weeks prior to event.

**VI. APPENDICES AND/OR ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix 1 - BLM Sensitive Species associated with BITD 2008 proposed race course  
Appendix 2 - Neo-tropical Migratory Birds, Species of Concern associated with the BITD 2008 proposed race course  
Appendix 3 – Permit stipulations associated with Proposed Action

**Appendix 1 - BLM Sensitive Species (Page 1 of 1)**

**Animal**

Golden eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>
Ferruginous hawk	<i>Buteo regalis</i>
Northern harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Prairie falcon	<i>Falco mexicanus</i>
Swainson hawk	<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>
Burowing owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>
Short-eared owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>
Juniper titmouse	<i>Baeolophus griseus</i>
Pinyon jay	<i>Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus</i>
Loggerhead shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Pooecetes gramineus</i>
Gray Vireo	<i>Vireo vicinior</i>
Bendire thrasher	<i>Toxostoma bendirei</i>
Vaux's swift	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>
Mountain quail	<i>Oreortyx pictus</i>
Greater sage grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>
Western pipistrelle bat	<i>Pipistrellus hesperus</i>
Pallid bat	<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>
Spotted bat	<i>Euderma maculatum</i>
Silver-haired bat	<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i>
Townsend's big-eared bat	<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>
Big brown bat	<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>
Hoary bat	<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>
Brazilian free-tailed bat	<i>Tadarida brasiliensis</i>
Long-eared myotis	<i>Myotis evotis</i>
Fringed myotis	<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>
Yuma myotis	<i>Myotis yumanensis</i>
California myotis	<i>Myotis californicus</i>
Small-footed myotis	<i>Myotis ciliolabrum</i>
Little brown myotis	<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>
Long-legged myotis	<i>Myotis volans</i>
Desert bighorn sheep	<i>Ovis canadensis nelsoni</i>
Western white-tail jackrabbit	<i>Lepus townsendii</i>

Source: [www.natureserve.com](http://www.natureserve.com), [www.heritage.nv.gov](http://www.heritage.nv.gov), CCFO Habitat Management Plans, misc. observ

**Plant**

Nevada oryctes	<i>Oryctes nevadensis</i>
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**Appendix 2 - Neo-tropical Migratory Birds, Species of Concern (Page 1 of 1)**

**Grasslands** (Beidleman 2000)

Short-eared Owl                      *Asio flammeus*

**Salt Desert** (Neel 1999) -

Burrowing Owl                      *Athene cunicularia*

Loggerhead Shrike                      *Lanius ludovicianus*

**Western Shrublands**

**Lowland Shrub**

\* Costa's Hummingbird                      *Calypte costae*

**Shrubsteppe** (Beidleman 2000), **Sagebrush** (Neel 1999)

Sage Sparrow                      *Amphispiza belli*

Sage grouse                      *Centrocercus urophasianus*

Brewer's sparrow                      *Spizella breweri*

Ferruginous Hawk -                      *Buteo regalis*

Prairie Falcon                      *Falco mexicanus*

Northern Harrier                      *Circus cyaneus*

Mourning Dove                      *Zenaida macroura*

**Mountain Shrub** (Neel 1999; Beidleman 2000)

Virginia's Warbler                      *Vermivora virginiae*

**Woodland**

Gray Vireo                      *Vireo vicinior*

Pinyon Jay                      *Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*

Swainson's Hawk                      *Buteo swainsoni*

**Coniferous Forest -**

**Mixed conifer forests** (Beidleman 2000):

Olive-sided Flycatcher                      *Contopus cooperi* -

Band-tailed Pigeon                      *Patagioenas fasciata*

**Cliffs and Talus** (Neel 1999)

Golden Eagle                      *Aquila chrysaetos*

\*Peregrine Falcon                      *Falco peregrinus*

Issues: mining activity, rock climbing (Neel 1999) Golden eagles relatively intolerant of human activity (Floyd et al 2007)

**Appendix 3 – Permit Stipulations associated with Proposed Action**

The following stipulations would apply to BITD SRP NV-030-08030:

Mitigative Stipulations (see IV. C.):

1. The two sections of proposed routes located within Nugent Wash would not be permitted which would reduce potential impacts to sensitive species habitat and the spread of noxious weeds. The two route segments would be re-aligned on well established roads.

The permittee, Best In The Desert (BITD), must show a copy of the permit to any BLM other authorized official if requested. Failure to comply with any of the following conditions and/or stipulations may result in the revocation of the permit, citation, or denial of future permits.

A. This permit authorizes BITD to conduct the Vegas To Reno OHV race on approved routes through BLM managed lands in the Tonopah and Las Vegas Field Offices, and through the CCFO as delineated in the EA map (page 3). The type of use authorized is competitive OHV racing.

B. This permit covers one orientation drive in early August, 2008 and one competitive race in late August, 2008. Should circumstances warrant, this permit may be modified, suspended or revoked by the Authorizing officer at any time to protect public resources, health and safety, the natural environment, where non-compliance with permit stipulations has occurred, or when rules or standards are revised or updated.

C. The permittee is obligated to meet the following criteria: prompt completion of post use report and fee payment; satisfactory monitoring report from agency personnel; submission of current proof-of-liability insurance naming the U.S Government as additional insured for \$500,000 bodily injury for any one person; \$1,000,000 for any one occurrence; and \$50,000 property damage for any one occurrence.

In addition to the Standard Stipulations on the back of Permit NV-030-08030 the following instructions also apply:

1. Establishment of permanent markers and improvements is prohibited. Use of “Enviro” paint, paint balls, or colorful chalk sprayed, splattered or poured onto rocks, brush or the ground is prohibited. (Though these products advertise bio-degradable, dry climates prolong the products outdoor life.) Use of white gypsum or flour is ok. It should be washed, brushed off, or mixed into the soil.

Approved route marking consists of occasional flagging attached to clothes pins, wooden stakes or flour “dust” ground marking arrows on the dirt road surfaces. If using flagging, the issuing agency must be advised of the color of the flagging two weeks prior to the event and advised by phone when markings have been removed

Prior to final flagging, it is the permittee's responsibility to inspect the area within 100 feet of the route for hazards that may affect rider or public safety. **Discovery of un-marked abandoned mine features must be reported immediately to BLM or Nevada Department of Mine Safety at 1-800-541-MINE.** The permittee must remove all route markers and other debris immediately following the event.

During flagging operations and rehabilitation work, club members shall be aware of wildlife, livestock and wild horses. Every effort shall be made to ensure that birthing, nesting, foaling, calving and fawning animals happened upon shall not be harassed. Sightings, conflicts and mortalities shall be reported to BLM monitors immediately.

2. The Start/Finish and pit areas must be clearly flagged and positioned so as not to restrict or impair normal road traffic flow nor contribute to resource (vegetation, soil, road, etc.) degradation. If the actual Start Area is located away from the main pit, participants and spectators **must** travel on established or designated route(s) to transit to the start area. It is the permittees responsibility to direct this transit.

The event course will follow predetermined/authorized routes as shown on the attached permit map(s). Traffic control methods and Check Points are to be located with the intent of keeping riders on the course and avoiding short cuts. Participants must use existing routes as marked on the ground as the travel route or as described on the ride scroll or global positioning navigation system. The route may not be improved without consultation with the BLM. This includes trimming tree branches, cutting brush or loosening fence lines along the route.

3. Participants shall observe all applicable Federal, State and local laws, regulations and ordinances associated with the premises of the event. Vehicles used in the event shall be motorcycles. Helmets are required attire. All vehicles shall have legal and properly functioning mufflers and spark arresters.

The permittee may be held accountable for the costs of fire suppression if it is evident that a fire was caused by participants.

4. OHV free-play (motocross, hill climbs, cross-country riding, etc.) is prohibited in conjunction with the event. This includes the start-finish and pits. Participant concentration areas (camping, staging, refueling, rest areas, etc.) shall be located in previously disturbed areas and approved prior to the event.

Entrants, spectators, children and pit personnel are to be advised that initiation of new trails or cross-country vehicle travel is prohibited. Riders must be cautioned that passing must take place completely within the approved route path. Avoid wet areas, limit passage through these areas to one established route.

5. The permittee assumes responsibility for public safety and sanitation during all phases of the event. The permittee shall designate a qualified first aid coordinator to organize and provide the necessary personnel with appropriate communications and transportation equipment to insure the rapid assistance to injured participants.

An adequate supply of portable toilets and trash barrels will be available at any field location accommodating spectators, participants or support personnel. All refuse must be removed from these areas immediately after occupation.

Dumping of sewage or petroleum products onto the ground is prohibited. Refueling and other major servicing of vehicles will be restricted to designated pit areas. Spontaneous pit activities at Check Points and road crossings must remain clean of all residues. Accidental spills of petroleum products must be contained to the smallest extent possible. **Any spill of one (1) quart or more must be reported to BLM immediately.** The permittee shall be responsible for the clean-up and proper disposal of any soils contaminated by such spills.

6. Cultural resources (historical or prehistoric site or object, including, but not limited to, ruins, historic buildings, artifacts, rock art, and hearths) are protected and shall not be damaged or removed. All personnel associated with the permitted activity will be informed by the permittee that they are subject to prosecution for vandalizing and/or collecting any historic or prehistoric artifacts or remains. Inadvertent surface or subsurface discoveries of cultural resources or fossil materials shall be left undisturbed.

The permittee will be responsible to ensure that historical, archaeological, cultural, or paleontological values are not damaged, destroyed, or removed by any participants on authorized trips. Unless specifically authorized, collection of plants, rocks, fossils, artifacts, shed antlers, animals or parts of animals is prohibited. Permits for such collecting are issued separately outside of a Special Recreation Permit.

7. The permittee must submit a Post-Use report (form attached) within 30 days following the event. Number of entrants, any injuries or property damage must be reported. Serious accidents or deaths must be reported to BLM within 24 hours of occurrence.

8. A Public Land Closure for the event route **will** be in effect the day of the event. The proponent is responsible for marking all entry and exit points along the course warning the public of the closure.

9. The permittee must provide a communications system from the event course to the pit area, sweep motorcyclists, four-wheel drive rescue units, air rescue units, and law enforcement personnel. Establishment of an Emergency Priority frequency that will not interfere with event operations is recommended.

The permittee shall provide for First Aid, Emergency response coordination and law enforcement should a participant, spectator or other public become sick, injured, disruptive or belligerent at the event.

Fire extinguishers must be located at fueling/pit area.

The permittee shall notify local emergency response personnel 30 days prior to the event and a reminder call the day before the event.

**10. Emergency Reporting Requirements:**

- **Call 911 for an Initial Attack or Other Immediate Emergency Response**
  - Sierra Front Interagency Dispatch Center: 775-883-5353 (wildland fire emergency)

***Information needed when reporting wildland fire includes:***

- ***Location: Geographical reference, if possible Latitude/longitude coordinates;***
- ***Description: fire size, spread, color of smoke, observations about cause, etc.***
- Your name, call back telephone number, event / project associated

**Fire Suppression / Reporting:**

The Permittee shall, independently and in cooperation with the Government, take all reasonable action to report, prevent, and suppress fires along the event route and event areas. Independent initial action must be prompt to reduce or eliminate fire spread.

The Permittee shall report **ALL** observed wildland fires on or in the vicinity of the event to the Sierra Front Interagency Dispatch Center.

**Contact Phone Numbers:**

- Bureau of Land Management, Carson City Field Office:
  - Ken Smihula, Fire Management Officer 775-885-6103
  - Steven Edgar, Fire Mitigation Specialist 775-885-6197
  - Kat Gonzales, Chief Dispatcher 775-883-5995
  - Arthur Callan, Project Lead 775-885-6141

**Wildland Fire Information:**

Current wildland fire information can be found on line at the Sierra Front Interagency Dispatch Center's (SFIDC) website @ <http://www.sierrafront.net/> Click on the Intelligence link.

This website provides current and expected weather conditions, posting of Red Flag watches and warnings as well as areas of current fire activity.

**Fuels & Fire Weather Awareness Information:**

Wildland vegetation is considered fire fuels, especially when dry during the summer and fall.

Fire fuel vegetation in our area include: grasses, sagebrush, juniper and pinyon trees.

During dry and windy weather conditions the potential for a fire start is high:

- Lightning storms:
  - Be extra vigilant when storms approach. Lightning caused fires may or may not include rain showers. This type of wildland fire may burn at an unusually high rate of speed due to the dry conditions and high winds that generally accompany storms.
  - Report lightning caused fires immediately.
  - Remain calm. Proceed to a safe location near the road or other non-vegetated area. Keep group together – account for personnel at all times.
- Human activities:
  - Check under and behind motorized vehicles frequently. Remove grass or brush debris that may collect. Park vehicles on dirt / soil areas.



**Mitigation Efforts:**

- Recommended fire suppression equipment per vehicle:
  - shovel, pulaski, 5 gallons of water
- Check under vehicles when parking off main roads.
  - Inspect often and remove grass and brush debris that may collect under exhaust, engine manifold or transmissions.
- Plan any activity that could cause a spark the morning, when the relative humidity is up and the temperatures are cooler.
- Be especially vigilant when operating equipment / mechanical tools on rocky ground.
- Smokers must be made aware of fire conditions and Seasonal Fire Restriction rules.
  - Smoking is generally prohibited except in an enclosed vehicle or in a developed campground.
  - Butts and ash must be contained at all times, extinguished completely and disposed of in a metal, leather, or water or sand filled receptacle to be disposed of off-public land.

**Wildfire Suppression Costs:**

Under Title 43 CFR 9212 the Permittee could be held liable for costs should a wildland fire be determined to be a direct cause by the activities or participants associated with the event.

**EVENT COURSE OR AREA REHABILITATION GUIDELINES**

It is the permittee's responsibility to initiate care of public lands and resources.

The issuing agency may inspect the course, pit and event areas immediately after and within two to four weeks following the event to evaluate event affects on resources and permittee's compliance with resource protection and rehabilitation measures. The permittee shall be notified of additional rehabilitation needs, as necessary.

The permittee may be required to grade, recontour, drag, disc or seed soil and vegetation areas within the course and pit areas that were significantly changed or impacted as a result of the event. Main access roads used by support or rescue vehicles during muddy conditions where significant road damage occurs must be graded to pre-event status.

**\*Post Event rehabilitation guidelines *prior* to BLM inspection:**

- a.) Where berms, ruts and/or depressions due to soil loss have occurred, smooth the race/event trail to pre-event soil levels. Use a drag harrow to loosen and spread soils to create a more natural appearance and to maintain trail condition for future use.
- b). Neutralize road ruts 6" deep or more where soil erosion or channelized water run-off is likely, or where safety to other vehicle traffic could be affected.
- c). Reduce berms created by hard turns on commonly used roads and trails. Expose vegetation that has been covered by berms.

d) Repair any damages to fences, posts, gates or range improvements that occurred as a result of the race/event. Soil ruts that develop at gate locations must be reduced to prevent livestock from getting under the gate/fence. Loose wire must be tightened to prevent livestock entanglement. Leave gates open or closed according to condition found at race time.

e). If mechanized equipment is required to make trail repairs, use **must** be coordinated with BLM. Extra caution must be taken when making repairs near historic ruins, rock walls, tailings piles, and historic debris.

Failure to complete clean-up and course restoration within 30 days following an event, unless an extension is granted by BLM, may affect future permit opportunities and may cost the permittee additional fees. If BLM employees have to do course clean-up and restoration, the permittee may be billed up to \$50 per employee per hour plus equipment costs.

Performance evaluation, violations, and penalties will be based upon:

- a) Stipulation and Operating Plan Compliance;
- b) Protection of Resource Values; and
- c) Quality and safety of services provided to the public.

Performance levels are:

A= Acceptable: Permittee is in compliance with permit stipulations; has taken prompt steps to rectify any performance issues/complaints; does not repeatedly violate conditions or show disregard for stipulations.

P= Probationary: Where there has been repeated violations or a disregard for permit stipulations.

U= Unacceptable: Permittee willfully and/or repeatedly violated permit conditions to provide substandard service to the public. Conduct is lacking in reasonableness or responsibility to the point that it becomes reckless or negligent.

Response to Violations and Penalties:

A= Complaints/issues may be discussed over the phone or in writing. When due dates or completion dates are established, the permittee will be afforded a 15 day grace period, unless otherwise specified.

P= A Notice of Noncompliance (Notice) will be issued by the Authorized Officer specifying in what respects the permittee has failed to comply, the terms of the probationary status, and the consequences of further noncompliance.

U= Permit privileges would be revoked for one to three years. The permittee would be allowed the opportunity to appeal the decision under Title 43 CFR, Part 4.

Critical Standards - a breach of critical standards can lead directly to administrative penalties, suspension or revocation of a permit. Critical standards are stipulations and requirements necessary for the health and welfare of the public and protection of resources. The permit shall be suspended or revoked if required State or local licenses pertaining to public health and safety are revoked. Violation of mandatory Federal or State safety requirements will result in probationary status or loss of permit privileges.

The conviction of a violation of any Federal or State law or regulation pertaining to the conservation or protection of natural resources, the environment, endangered species or antiquities that is related to permit operations will result in probationary status or loss of permit privileges.

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